

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

FEB 11 2009

PTO/SB/21 (01-09)


Approved for use through 02/28/2009. OMB 0651-0031

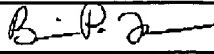
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

TRANSMITTAL FORM <small>(to be used for all correspondence after initial filing)</small>	Application Number	09/682,583	
	Filing Date	09/21/2001	
	First Named Inventor	David N. Brotherton	
	Art Unit	3891	
	Examiner Name	Akintola, Olabode	
Total Number of Pages in This Submission	-54-	Attorney Docket Number	P3S2002338US

ENCLOSURES (Check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Amendment/Reply <input type="checkbox"/> After Final <input type="checkbox"/> Affidavits/declaration(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request <input type="checkbox"/> Express Abandonment Request <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Copy of Priority Document(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Missing Parts/ <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Missing Parts under 37 CFR 1.52 or 1.53	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing-related Papers <input type="checkbox"/> Petition <input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Convert to a Provisional Application <input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation Change of Correspondence Address <input type="checkbox"/> Terminal Disclaimer <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Refund <input type="checkbox"/> CD, Number of CD(s) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Table on CD	<input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to TC <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Board of Appeals and Interferences <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to TC (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief) <input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary Information <input type="checkbox"/> Status Letter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Enclosure(s) (please identify below): Cover Letter
Remarks _____		

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT			
Firm Name	ONDA TECHNO Int. Patent Attys.		
Signature			
Printed name	Brian P. Furrer		
Date	February 11, 2009	Reg. No.	37,627

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION/MAILING			
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date shown below:			
Signature			
Typed or printed name	Brian P. Furrer	Date	February 11, 2009

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.5. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.11 and 1.14. This collection is estimated to 2 hours to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

FEB 11 2009

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Serial No. 09/682,583

Filing Date: 09/21/2001

Group Art Unit: 3691

First Named Inventor: David N. Brotherston

Examiner: Akintola, Olabode

Title: **APPARATUS AND METHOD
FOR PROVIDING PRODUCTS AND
SERVICES IN A TRANSPORT VEHICLE
USING A NETWORK OF COMPUTERS**

Attorney Docket No. P3S2002336US

February 11, 2009

Gifu, Japan

COVER LETTER FOR AMENDED APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
USA

Dear Honorable Commissioner for Patents:

The present filing is in response to the Notification of Non-Compliant Appeal Brief dated January 15, 2009. An amended Appeal Brief is enclosed herewith, which is believed to properly correct the sections objected to in the Notification. The corrections necessitated adding additional pages to the Appeal Brief. As the total number of pages is printed at the bottom of each page, the corrections required revising all of the pages in the document. Incidental revisions were also made throughout the document to correct typographical and/or grammatical errors.

The undersigned thanks Ms. Darlene Brown, Patent Appeals Specialist, for her patience and help in explaining the revisions necessary to overcome the objections.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian P. Furrer, USPTO Reg. No. 37,627
ONDA TECHNO Intl. Patent Attys.
12-1, Omiya-cho 2-chome
Gifu-city 500-8731 JAPAN
Tel. 81-58-265-9124

FEB 11 2009

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Filing Date: 09/21/2001

Group Art Unit: 3691

First Named Inventor: David N. Brotherston

Examiner: Akintola, Olabode

Title: **APPARATUS AND METHOD
FOR PROVIDING PRODUCTS AND
SERVICES IN A TRANSPORT VEHICLE
USING A NETWORK OF COMPUTERS**

Attorney Docket No. P3S2002336US

February 11, 2009

Gifu, Japan

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR § 41.37

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
USA

I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest is the inventor, David N. Brotherston.

II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no related appeals or interferences.

III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-25 stand rejected and are being appealed.

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

All amendments have been entered.

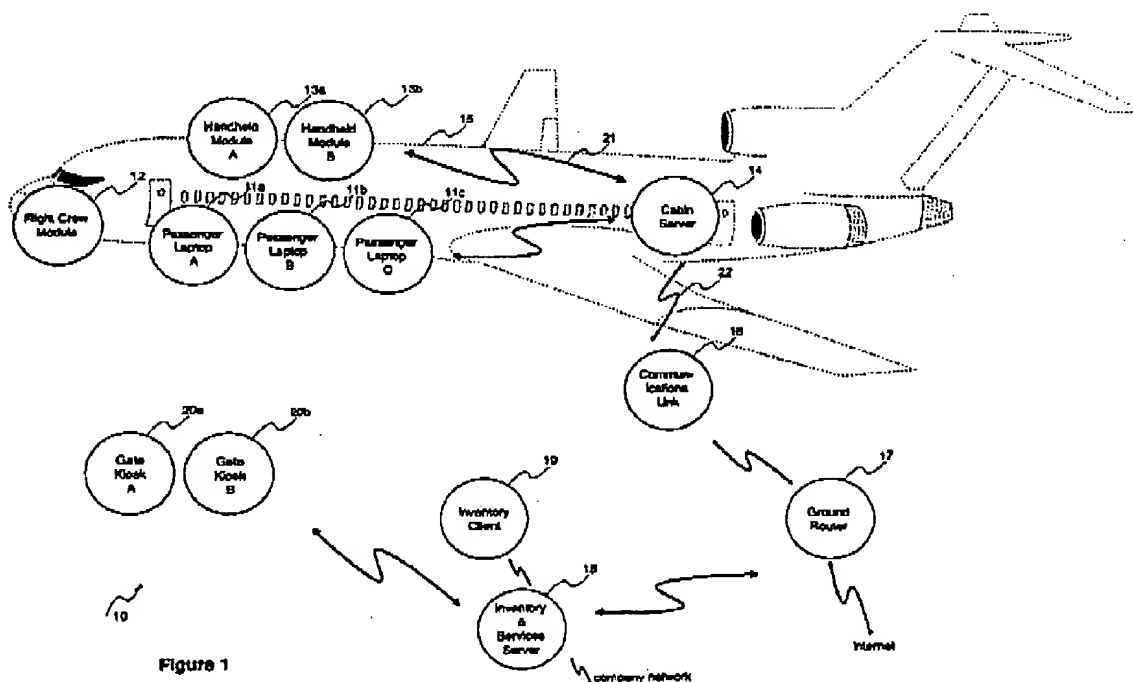
V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

A. Independent Claim 1

The invention recited in Claim 1 is directed to “[a] system for fulfilling services orders onboard a transport vehicle”. Figure 1 of the present application illustrates a network (12) in an exemplary fashion for a commercial aircraft (15) (Specification, Page 6, last line to Page 7, line 2). The purpose of the network is to provide a wider range of products and services to passengers more efficiently and with greater revenue potential (Specification, Page 7, lines 18 and 19). This arrangement permits mining of customer records for inventory planning and specific customer preferences (Specification, Page 16, lines 17 and 18).

Figure 1 from the application is reproduced below:



Claim 1 recites the system as comprising “a plurality of computers that include an onboard computer transported with the vehicle, and an external computer not transported with the vehicle”. In pertinent part, the Specification at Page 7, lines 9-11 describes a

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

computer server (14), called a Cabin Server, on the vehicle for storing data, performing calculations, and acting as a communications gateway to other members in the network. There is additionally a ground-based computer server (18), called an Inventory & Services Server, for managing product inventory and customer orders (Specification, Page 7, lines 12 and 13).

Claim 1 further recites “software installed on the onboard computer”. The claim recites the software as “being operable on the onboard computer for causing the onboard computer to perform tasks”. The first recited task is “obtaining service information from the external computer via communication with the external computer if a communication pathway to the external computer is open”.

The Specification at Page 8, lines 24-26 describes the hardware (40) for the Cabin Server (14) as an off-the-shelf laptop or other portable personal computer having a modem (45). The modem is for Internet access via through a communications link (16) and ground router (17) (Specification, Page 7, lines 11 and 12 and Page 9, lines 1-7). The Cabin Server software (310) includes server modules to support passenger service (312) and inventory control (313) (Specification, Page 8, lines 28-30). This software operates to retrieve vehicle specific database information from the ground based server (18) and manages the customer database and inventory for the vehicle during trips (Specification, Page 8, lines 30-32). The software includes a store and forward router for TCP/IP communication, which is unique in that packets may be accumulated until a link is established (Specification, Page 8, lines 32-35).

The second recited task is “providing access to service information by vehicle personnel for fulfillment of the service orders”. Access to service information is provided by handheld computers (13a) through (13b) (Specification, Page 7, lines 6-8). Cabin attendants use the handheld computers (13a) through (13b) to manage the delivery of products and services to the passengers (Specification, Page 7, lines 7 and 8). The computers onboard the

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

aircraft (15) are members of a Local Area Network (LAN) (21) in which the communication medium is preferably wireless Ethernet (RF Ethernet) (Specification, Page 7, lines 20-23). Each handheld computer (13a) and (13b) includes an RF Ethernet PCMCIA card (34) for network communications with the Cabin Server (14) to receive service information for access by vehicle personnel (Specification, Page 8, lines 13-15).

Claim 1 additionally recites "software installed on the external computer". The claim recites the software as "being operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks". The first recited task is "acquiring information to determine the available services provided on the transport vehicle". As described in the Specification at Page 9, line 35 to Page 10, line 4, the range of products and services depends on how far prior to departure time that an order is submitted for products and services.

If a user makes an advance reservation, a wide range of products and services are available for pre-ordering and delivery on the transport vehicle (Specification, Page 10, lines 25-29). If a user delays pre-ordering until reaching the gate, an order still may be submitted prior to departure via Gate Kiosks (20a) and (20b) (shown in Figure 1 above; Specification at Page 10, lines 33-35). However, the available range is determined by stores at that terminal (Specification, Page 10, lines 2 and 3). In comparison, if the user submits an advance order via the Internet, the range is determined by base stores and the logistics of delivering supply to the relevant terminal (Specification, Page 9, last line to Page 10, line 3). More particularly, the ground-based computer server (18) "facilitates a three-tier store model that includes base level stores, terminal level stores, and vehicle level stores" (Specification, Page 10, lines 10-13).

The ground-based server (18) acquires information to determine available services by communication with the Gate Kiosks (20a) and (20b), the Cabin Server (14), and an Inventory Client (19) (Specification, Page 18, lines 13-16). The Inventory Client (19) is a handheld device that reads inventory bar codes and communicates inventory transfers to the

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

ground-based server (18) (Inventory & Services Server) (Specification, Lines 9 and 10).

FIG. 10a illustrates the information flow (Specification, Page 19, lines 20-22).

The second recited task for software “operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks” is “managing the delivery of services to the transport vehicle”. Customer records are generated based upon pre-ordering that support the dynamic movement of inventory onto the vehicle (Page 19, lines 4-6). In particular, inventory control software on the ground-based server (18) in conjunction with the Inventory Client (19) is used “to move inventory from Base level stores to Terminal level stores and subsequently to create a vehicle package comprising standard Vehicle level stores plus pre-ordered product” (Specification, Page 18, lines 33-last).

The last recited task for software “operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks” is “making service information obtainable by the onboard computer.” As stated in the Specification at Page 15, lines 7 and 8, the Cabin Server (14) is a client of the ground-based server (18). A pre-departure trip initialization uploads customer records and reported inventory from the ground-based server (18) to the Cabin Server 18 (Specification, Page 15, lines 17-19). More particularly, when initialization requests are received from a Cabin Server (443), customer records and planned inventory is transmitted via the ground router (17) and communications link (16) (Specification, Page 20, lines 5-9).

B. Independent Claim 7

The invention recited in Claim 7 is directed to “[a] system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle”. The claim recites the system as comprising “an onboard computer transported with the vehicle and connections with electronic devices operated by vehicle personnel or passengers”. As discussed earlier, Figure 1 illustrates a network (12) in an exemplary fashion for a commercial aircraft (15) (Specification, Page 6, last line to Page 7,

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

line 2). In particular, the Specification at Page 7, lines 8-11 describes a computer server (14) on the vehicle for storing data, performing calculations, and acting as a communications gateway to other members in the network.

The Specification at Page 7, lines 6-8 further describes handheld computers (13a) through (13b) that are used by cabin attendants to manage the delivery of products and services to the passengers. The Specification at Page 7, lines 3-5 additionally describes passenger laptop computers (11a) through (11c) that are used by passengers onboard the vehicle (15) to request and receive services. The computers onboard the aircraft (15) are members of a LAN (21) in which the communication medium is preferably wireless Ethernet (Specification, Page 7, lines 20-23).

Claim 7 further recites "the onboard computer including software, which when operated on the onboard computer and electronic devices causes the onboard computer to perform tasks". The first recited task is "providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on pre-selected products and services and historical preference".

As described in the Specification at Page 10, lines 26-33, when making an advance reservation a user may download software (Floppy Code) for execution on the user's laptop while onboard the transport vehicle. If the software is operated on the user's laptop, it allows the user to "to receive pre-selected products and services without making any further request to the cabin attendant" (Specification, Page 10, lines 30-33). In addition, the Specification at Page 20, lines 27-29, describes "data mining and other database analysis tools to provide predictive information for inventory management and marketing." In particular, a ground-based server (18) "provides a data warehouse architecture and implements data mining and other data analyses" (Specification, Page 18, lines 13-23).

FIG. 15c illustrates logic including a generic analysis mode (471) and a customer analysis mode (473) (Specification, Page 20, lines 26-31). In the generic analysis mode, inventory and customer records are mined for inventory planning (472). In the customer

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

analysis mode (473), the data is mined for specific customer preferences that may be used to support smart menu options (Specification, Page 20, lines 31-34).

A pre-departure trip initialization uploads customer data from a ground-based server (18) to the onboard computer server (14) (Specification, Page 15, lines 17 and 18). Thereafter, uploaded customer data is sent to passenger laptops (11a) through (11c) and the cabin attendants' handheld computers (13a) through (13b).

C. Independent Claim 8

The first portion of Claim 8 is identical to that of Claim 7. Specifically, Claim 8 is directed to a "[a] system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle". Claim 8 recites the system as comprising "an onboard computer transported with the vehicle and connections with electronic devices operated by vehicle personnel or passengers". Claim 8 further recites "the onboard computer including software, which when operated on the onboard computer and electronic devices causes the onboard computer to perform tasks". All of the foregoing recitations form the first portion of Claim 8, which is identical to the first portion of Claim 7 and therefore find support at the same locations in the Specification as discussed for these recitations of Claim 7.

Namely, Figure 1 illustrates a network (12) in an exemplary fashion for a commercial aircraft (15) (Specification, Page 6, last line to Page 7, line 2). The Specification at Page 7, lines 8-11 describes a computer server (14) on the vehicle for storing data, performing calculations, and acting as a communications gateway to other members in the network. The Specification at Page 7, lines 6-8 further describes handheld computers (13a) through (13b) that are used by cabin attendants to manage the delivery of products and services to the passengers. The Specification at Page 7, lines 3-5 additionally describes passenger laptop computers (11a) through (11c) that are used by passengers onboard the vehicle (15) to request and receive services. The computers onboard the aircraft (15) are members of a LAN (21) in

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

which the communication medium is preferably wireless Ethernet (Specification, Page 7, lines 20-23).

Claim 8 differs from Claim 7 only in two respects. First, Claim 8 recites that “the electronic devices include passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers.” This is supported by the Specification in the description of passenger laptops 11(a) through 11(c) as discussed above for Claim 7.

Second, Claim 8 recites different tasks performed by the onboard computer. In particular, Claim 8 recites the tasks “comprising accepting service orders entered via the electronic devices by vehicle personnel or passengers and making the service orders accessible to vehicle personnel”. In this regard, the Specification at Page 7, lines 6-8 describes handheld computers (13a) and (13b) that are used by cabin attendants to manage the delivery of products and services to the passengers. Passenger requests for services to a cabin attendant during a trip are recorded by the cabin attendant using one of the handheld computer (13a) and (13b) (Specification, Page 13, lines 15-17). The cabin attendant uses the handheld computer (13a) or (13b) “during the trip to manage distribution of the ordered products and services and record delivery to all passengers” (Specification, Page 13, lines 18-20).

If a passenger has one of the laptop computers (11a) through (11c), the passenger may use the laptop to request and receive services (Specification, Page 7, lines 3-5). The passenger laptops eliminate the requirement for a cabin attendant to process service requests (Specification, lines 27-29). The passenger laptops 11(a) through 11(c) are configured with software obtained via a Gate Kiosk (20a) or (20b) or the Internet to submit service requests via the LAN (21) (Specification, Page 7, lines 25-27). Order requests from passenger laptops (11a) through (11c) are submitted to the onboard computer server (14) (Specification, Page 7, line 36 to Page 8, line 1). Moreover, the onboard server (14) “features a user interface that allows cabin attendants to monitor and control the efficient management of product and service delivery from the galley area” (Specification, Page 15, lines 9-11).

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

D. Independent Claim 16

Claim 16 is directed to “[a] system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle”. Figure 1 illustrates a network (12) in an exemplary fashion for a commercial aircraft (15) (Specification, Page 6, last line to Page 7, line 2). The claim recites the system as “comprising an external computer not transported with the vehicle”. The Specification at Page 7, lines 12 and 13, further describes a ground-based computer server (18), called an Inventory & Services Server, for managing product inventory and customer orders.

Claim 16 recites the external computer as including software “operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks”. The first task recited is “accessing database information pertaining to vehicle departure, destination, past services orders, and inventory information”. As described in the Specification at Page 18, lines 13-23, the ground-based server (18) “provides a data warehouse architecture and implements data mining and other data analyses.” The Specification at Page 20, lines 27-29, further describes the ground-based server as implementing “data mining and other database analysis tools to provide predictive information for inventory management and marketing.” The ground-based computer server (18) has “storage capacity to support large databases of current and historical customer records in addition to all inventory data” (Specification, Page 9, lines 12-17). The claimed arrangement advantageously permits mining of customer records for inventory planning and specific customer preferences (Specification, Page 16, lines 17 and 18).

The next recited task is “based on the database information, estimating service orders expected to be received and recommending inventory for transport with the vehicle for onboard fulfillment of service orders”. As described in the Specification at Page 19, lines 9-11, “[t]hese databases support offline analysis to predict buying patterns and determine both the range of products and procurement strategies”.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

The last recited task is “providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on pre-selected products and services and historical preference”. FIG. 15c illustrates logic including a generic analysis mode (471) and a customer analysis mode (473) (Specification, Page 20, lines 26-31). In the generic analysis mode, inventory and customer records are mined for inventory planning (472). In the customer analysis mode (473), the data is mined for specific customer preferences that may be used to support smart menu options (Specification, Page 20, lines 31-34). Prior to vehicle trip departure, inventory control software on the ground-based computer server is used “to move inventory from Base level stores to Terminal level stores and subsequently to create a vehicle package comprising standard Vehicle level stores plus pre-ordered product (Specification, Page 18, line 33 to last).

A pre-departure trip initialization uploads customer data from the ground-based server (18) to an onboard computer server (14) (Specification, Page 15, lines 17 and 18). Thereafter, uploaded customer data is sent to passenger laptops (11a) through (11c) and the cabin attendants’ handheld computers (13a) through (13b). As described in the Specification at Page 10, lines 26-33, when making an advance reservation a user may download software (Floppy Code) for execution on the user’s laptop while onboard the transport vehicle. If the software is operated on the user’s laptop, it allows the user to “to receive pre-selected products and services without making any further request to the cabin attendant” (Specification, Page 10, lines 30-33).

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

VI. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

1. Whether there is a new ground of rejection in the most recent Office Action, whether there has been compliance with compact prosecution, and whether prosecution of the application is being improperly delayed.
2. Whether any of Claims 1-3 are obvious over US Patent No. 5,311,302 to Berry et al. ("*Berry*") in view of US Patent No. 5,444,444 to Ross ("*Ross*") under 35 USC 103(a).
3. Whether each of Claims 4 and 14 is obvious under 35 USC 103(a) over Berry in view of Ross, and further in view of US Patent No. 5,845,263 to Camaisa ("*Camaisa*") and/or US Patent No. 6,026,375 to Hall ("*Hall*").
4. Whether Claim 5 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 6,249,774 to Roden et al. ("*Roden*") under 35 USC 103(a).
5. Whether Claim 6 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 5,646,389 to Bravman et al. ("*Roden*") under 35 USC 103(a).
6. Whether Claim 25 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 5,979,757 to Tracy et al. ("*Tracy*") under 35 USC 103(a).
7. Whether any of Claims 7 and 12 are obvious over Berry in view of US Patent No. 5,850,433 to Rondeau ("*Rondeau*") under 35 USC 103(a) and whether the Examiner may distill the claimed invention down to a "concept".
8. Whether any of Claims 10 and 11 are obvious over Berry, Rondeau, and Tracy under 35 USC 103(a).
9. Whether Claim 13 is obvious over Berry, Rondeau, and Ross under 35 USC 103(a).
10. Whether Claim 14 is obvious under over Berry, Rondeau, Ross, and Camaisa and/or Hall.
11. Whether Claim 15 is obvious over Berry, Rondeau, Ross and US Patent No. 6,201,797 to Leuca et al. ("*Leuca*") under 35 USC 103(a).

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

12. Whether any of Claims 8 and 9 are obvious over Berry in view of US Patent No. 5,727,163 to Bezos ("*Bezos*") under 35 USC 103(a).

13. Whether any of Claims 16 through 24 are obvious over (1) Berry, (2) Ross, (3) Camaisa, (4) Rondeau, (5) Roden and (6) US Patent No. 6,122,620 to Weber ("*Weber*") under 35 USC 103(a) and whether the Examiner may distill the claimed invention down to a "concept".

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

VII. ARGUMENT

Grounds of Rejection #1 To Be Reviewed: Whether there is a new ground of rejection in the most recent Office Action, whether there has been compliance with compact prosecution, and whether prosecution of the application is being improperly delayed

In response to issuance of a Final Office Action dated January 10, 2008, the applicant filed an appeal and brief in support thereof. The Examiner responded by reopening prosecution to enter a new ground of rejection in an Office Action dated August 11, 2008. Specifically, Page 2 of the Office Action quotes from paragraph 12.187 from MPEP 1207.04. According to MPEP 1207.04, “[t]he examiner may, with approval from the supervisory patent examiner, reopen prosecution *to enter a new ground of rejection* after appellant’s brief or reply brief has been filed” (emphasis added).

Appellant has reviewed the most recent Office Action dated August 11, 2008, and cannot locate any new grounds of rejection. This is because the Office Action dated August 11, 2008 is a duplicate of the Final Office Action dated January 10, 2008. Specifically, Pages 3-11 of the present Office Action correspond *exactly* to Pages 2-10 of the previous Final Office Action, including identical typographical errors.

For instance, “Roden” is misspelled as “Rodent” (emphasis added) on Page 11 of the present Office Action as it is on corresponding Page 10 of the previous Final Office Action. For another example, compare the sentence bridging Pages 7 and 8 of the present Office Action with the same sentence bridging Pages 6 and 7 of the previous Final Office Action. The two sentences are identical, including typographical errors.

Examiner Note (3) in MPEP 1207.05 directs the Examiner to identify the new ground or grounds of rejection. The present Office Action is not in compliance with the direction and merely states on Page 2 that “[t]he following rejections are set forth below” and does not identify any new ground or grounds. Accordingly, no new ground of rejection has been made.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

More particularly, the present Office Action is simply a cut-and-paste from Pages 2-10 of the previous Final Office Action of January 10, 2008. The Examiner has therefore improperly reopened prosecution after the filing of applicant's Appeal Brief.

Furthermore, it is pointed out to the Board, that even if there was a new ground of rejection, that this would be the fourth new grounds of rejection made during the prosecution of this application. Namely, the Examiner previously made the following new grounds of rejection:

- (1) Office Action dated March 20, 2007 (Page 7 of the Action);
- (2) Office Action dated September 7, 2007 (Page 11 of the Action);
- (3) Final Office Action dated January 10, 2008 (Page 12 of the Action in asserting "it is well known that [a] PDA uses wireless connectivity", discussed infra).

To promote the policy of compact prosecution, Section 2164.04 of the MPEP provides in pertinent part that "the first Office action on the merits should present the best case with all the relevant reasons, issues, and evidence so that all such rejections can be withdrawn if applicant provides appropriate convincing arguments and/or evidence in rebuttal." In addition, MPEP 2164.04 states that "the examiner should always look for enabled, allowable subject matter and communicate to applicant what that subject matter is at the earliest point possible in the prosecution of the application" (emphasis in original).

It is astounding that that in a total of twenty-five pending claims and five Office Actions of which the majority assert new grounds of rejection that the Examiner has failed to communicate *any* subject matter as allowable. It is as if the Examiner decided in advance that all claims would be rejected and would repeatedly search for prior art in response to Applicant's replies until either the Examiner found something supporting his rejections or the Applicant was worn down and abandoned the application.

It took the US Patent Office more than five years from the filing date of this application to issue a first office action on the merits (Office Action dated November 3, 2006).

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

The prosecution before the present Examiner of record has continued for more than two additional years, with repeated assertions of new grounds of rejections that have subjected the application to piecemeal examination and has further delayed the prosecution. In this regard, Section 707.07(g) of the MPEP states that “[p]iecemeal examination should be avoided as much as possible.”

The benefits cited in the application impact a significant segment of the US economy and therefore the treatment accorded this application by the US Patent Office is perplexing. The application has now been pending for more than seven years and applicant has timely responded to *every* action to date without any extensions. Multiple teleconferences have been held with the Examiner and the undersigned, including one teleconference in which the inventor participated. To reopen prosecution at this stage without identifying any new grounds is a disservice to the Applicant, the patent process, and the national well being.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that that there has been failure to comply with the policy of compact prosecution, that the reopening of prosecution was for an improper purpose, namely, for more delay to an already overly extended review, and that there are compelling reasons for the U.S. Patent office to conclude expeditiously.

Accordingly, the Board is requested to disallow any assertion of new grounds of rejection by the Examiner, and future assertions of new grounds of rejection should not be allowed unless there is a convincing showing of why the purported new grounds were not submitted earlier.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #2 To Be Reviewed: Whether any of Claims 1-3 are obvious over US Patent No. 5,311,302 to Berry et al. ("Berry") in view of US Patent No. 5,444,444 to Ross ("Ross") under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 1-3 each stand rejected in the present Office Action as obvious over Berry in view of Ross (present Office Action, Page 3). Berry discloses an interactive video entertainment and data management system (10) for a passenger vehicle, such as an aircraft (Berry, Col. 3, lines 4-14). In particular, Berry teaches providing a central terminal (12) in an aircraft with remote video terminals (14) mounted in passenger seatbacks (16) or remote video terminals (80) in seat armrest consoles (84) (Berry, Col. 3, lines 4-14 and Col. 6, line 66 to Col. 7, line 5). Fig. 6 from Berry is reproduced as follows illustrating one of the remote video terminals (80) for a seat armrest console (84) as follows:

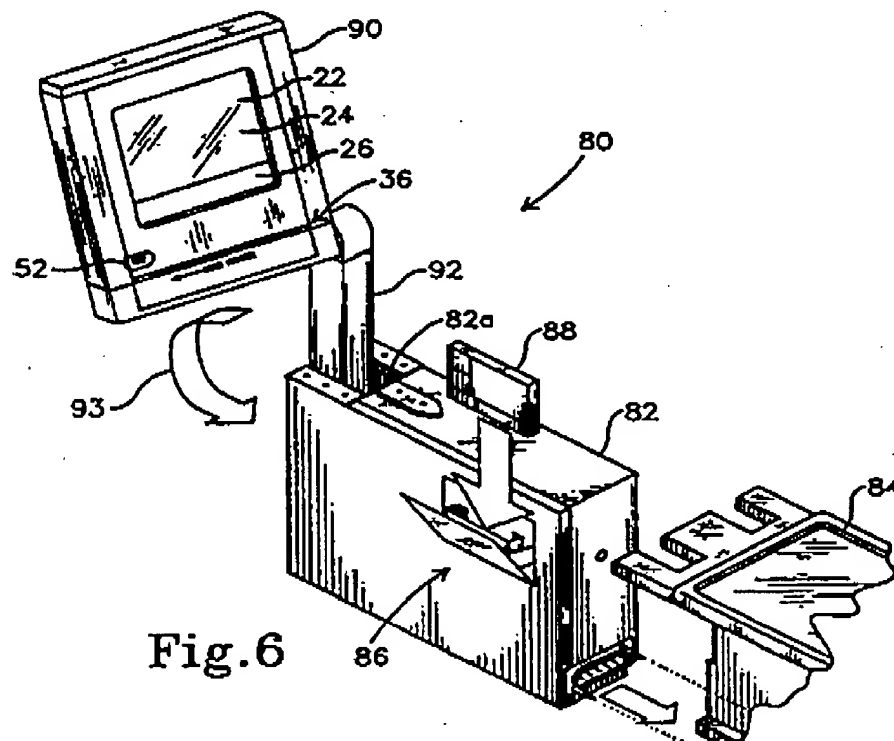


Fig. 6

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

The Examiner acknowledges in the Office Action that “Berry does not explicitly teach an external computer not transported with the vehicle” (present Office Action, Page 3). In addition, the Examiner does not assert that Berry discloses the recitations in paragraph (b) through the end of Claim 1. For this reason, the Examiner cites Ross and asserts a combination Berry and Ross in rejecting Claim 1.

Ross is directed to an apparatus and method for notifying a recipient of an unscheduled delivery (Ross, Front Page, title). A preferred embodiment of such an apparatus includes a delivery vehicle having a controller (10) (Ross, Col. 3, lines 25-29, Figs. 1 and 3). Further included is a communications apparatus (20) for communications to a selected one of a plurality of recipients (21) of articles and packages to be delivered by the operator of that particular delivery vehicle (Ross, Col. 3, lines 56-65). The communication apparatus (20) in addition communicates with a central controller that is preferably a main-frame computer (Ross, 4, lines 1 and 2). The central controller (22) communicates through a multiplexer with a plurality of controllers (10) with each controller (10) being in one of the delivery vehicles for a delivery company (Ross, Col. 3, line 65 to Col. 4, line 7).

The Examiner asserts that Ross teaches an onboard computer in the form of the controller (10) and “an external computer not transported with the vehicle” in the form of the controller (22) (present Office Action, Page 4). In addition, the Office Action asserts that the disclosure in Ross at Col. 3, lines 65 through Col. 4, line 22, meets all of the recitations of paragraph (c) in Claim 1, including the three subparagraphs (i) through (iii).

The rejection of Claim 1 based on the Berry/Ross combination is improper and should be reversed because the Examiner has ignored a claim recitation that the asserted combination does not meet. Specifically, the Examiner states at Page 4 of the present Office Action that Ross teaches software being operable on the external computer to perform tasks including “i) acquiring information to determine the available services provided; and ii)

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

managing the delivery of services. That is incorrect and omits part of the pertinent recitation from Claim 1. The correct recitation with the foregoing omitted portion shown in bold is “i) acquiring information to determine the available services provided ***on the transport vehicle***”.

The Examiner repeated the same error on Page 11 of the previous Final Office Action dated January 10, 2008 in the section entitled “Response to Arguments”. While the present Office Action of August 11, 2008 should have superseded the previous Final Office Action as discussed earlier, the present Office Action exactly duplicates all of the rejections of the previous Final Office Action. The only difference between the present Office Action and the previous Final Office Action is that the present action does not include the section entitled “Response to Arguments”. Accordingly, it is submitted that the Examiner’s “Response to Arguments” is highly pertinent as all the rejections and reasons therefore are identical between the present Office Action and the previous Final Action.

According to the Examiner in the previous Final Office Action on Page 11, “Ross teaches a path for communicating *delivery status information* between the controller 10 and central controller 22” (emphasis in original). The Examiner parenthetically concludes that this meets the recitation of “*acquiring information to determine the available services provided*” (Final Office Action, Page 11, emphasis in original). Again, the Examiner has ignored the recitation of “***on the transport vehicle***” in subparagraph i) of paragraph (c) in Claim 1 (emphasis added).

The recipients of the deliveries in Ross are not on the asserted transport vehicle, i.e., the delivery vehicle. Hence, “communicating delivery status” does not meet the recitation of “*acquiring information to determine the available services provided **on the transport vehicle***” because delivery in Ross does not occur on the vehicle. Information regarding delivery status in Ross therefore cannot be “used to determine the available services provided on the transport vehicle” as deliveries are not provided on the transport vehicle.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Moreover, the suggestion in Ross is that deliveries would never occur on a transport vehicle. According to Ross “passengers on an aircraft are items to be delivered to recipients (i.e., persons meeting the passenger at the airport)” (Ross, Col. 7, 24-27). Thus, Ross does not contemplate that deliveries would ever be made to recipients on a transport vehicle because passengers are items to be delivered and NOT recipients.

In addition, “communicating delivery status” is not a service. The status in Ross is information indicating whether the service has been completed, i.e., delivery, and not information indicating the “available services provided on the transport vehicle” as recited in Claim 1.

While pending claims in examination are given their broadest reasonable interpretation, that interpretation must be consistent with the specification. MPEP 2111; Phillips v. AWH Corp., 415 F.3d 1303, 1316, 75 USPQ2d 1321, 1329 (Fed. Cir. 2005) (en banc). Equating status with service as the Examiner has done is inconsistent with the present specification.

Namely, the present application in the written description and drawings describes status as different and not the same as service. In particular, the Specification at Page 17, line 33 to Page 18, line 1, describes record status being sent back to a new passenger laptop (11a) through (11c) or a handheld module (13a) or (13b) when joining the network (378) on the transport vehicle. The record status is not the same as service because the next sentence states that “[i]f a service request is received” different processing occurs showing that returning status is not equated with providing service (Specification, Page 18, lines 1-4). This interpretation is also supported in the Specification at Page 14, lines 19 and 20, which states that “[s]ervice requests, including credit card verifications 259 communicate with the Cabin Server 14 to update the status 260”. Status (260) in the present application is shown in Figure 13b, which is reproduced as follows:

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

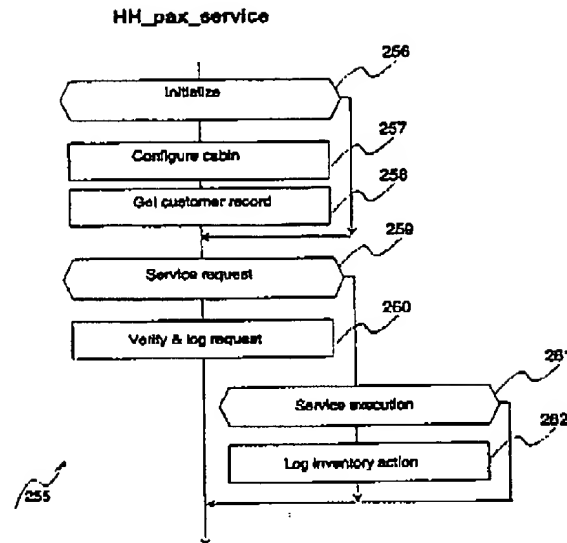


Figure 13b

As can be seen status (260) is labeled in Figure 13b as “Verify & log request” and is thereafter followed by “Service execution”. Therefore, returning status is not the same as providing service in the present written description and drawings. Specifically, providing service, i.e., service execution (261) is different than providing status.

Applicant was fully cognizant and versed in the usage of the word status at the time of filing of the application as shown by the above usage in the Specification and drawing figures. The word status is used at several other locations in the Specification, for example at Page 7, line 36; Page 12, line 9; Page 14, line 11; Page 14, line 25; and also in Figure 12b. If the Applicant had intended to recite status in Claim 1, it would have been done, for example by reciting “acquiring information to determine the *status* of available services provided on the transport vehicle”. However, that was not what was intended, which is why status is not recited in Claim 1.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Construction of the word service as including status is therefore not supported by the words of the claim, the description in the Specification, and the drawing figures. Accordingly, the Examiner's construction of the recitation of service in Claim 1 as equivalent to status is inconsistent with the specification and therefore incorrect. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection for obviousness should be reversed.

Finally, the US Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., stated that "rejections on obviousness grounds cannot be sustained by mere conclusory statements; instead there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness." 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007), quoting In re Kahn, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329 (Fed. Cir. 2006). The reasoning presented by the Examiner is conclusory and not articulated. Namely, the Examiner's only reasoning is a conclusory statement made without support that one would have been motivated to combine Berry and Ross "in order to monitor and coordinate delivery of product to [a] recipient" (Final Office Action, Page 3).

Even if the alleged motivation for combination was true, no reasoning has been provided as to why one would be motivated to monitor and coordinated delivery of products to a recipient "*on a transport vehicle*" as is recited in Claim 1. The suggestion in Ross as discussed above is that this would never occur because Ross teaches that "passengers on an aircraft are items to be delivered to recipients (i.e., persons meeting the passenger at the airport" (Ross, Col. 7, 24-27). Thus, Ross does not contemplate that deliveries would ever be made to recipients on a transport vehicle and therefore teaches away from the claimed invention. As discussed in MPEP 2145, "[a] prior art reference that 'teaches away' from the claimed invention is a significant factor to be considered in determining obviousness".

Finally, a method as taught in Ross for making unscheduled deliveries is not supported by some rational underpinning for making deliveries to passengers on a commercial passenger aircraft as disclosed in Berry. Access to aircraft, especially

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

commercial passenger aircraft, is highly restricted to prevent terrorism. A person of ordinary skill in the art would therefore not be motivated in applying the teachings of Ross to Berry as airports would not allow unscheduled deliveries of packages to aircraft passengers as this would greatly compromise security. Moreover, it is unlikely that unscheduled deliveries would be allowed to passengers on any form of public transportation due to security concerns.

Section 2142 of the MPEP provides that “[t]he examiner bears the initial burden of factually supporting any *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness” (emphasis in original; also see In re Oeticker, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). As further provided in MPEP 2142 “[i]f the examiner does not produce a *prima facie* case, the applicant is under no obligation to submit evidence of nonobviousness (emphasis in original).

The Examiner has not met the initial burden of factually supporting a *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness. As discussed above, the asserted combination does not meet all of the recitations of the claim, the claim has been improperly construed, the cited prior art teaches away from the claim, and articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning has not been provided. Accordingly, reversal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 3 each depend from Claim 1 and therefore distinguish over the cited art for at least the same reasons as Claim 1. With respect to Claims 2 and 3, the Examiner ignores recitations thereof. In Claim 2, the Examiner ignores the recitation that “the onboard computer software includes logic routines adapted for”. In Claim 3, the Examiner ignores the recitation of “logic routines”. Accordingly, Claims 2 and 3 distinguish over the cited art in addition to the reasons stated for Claim 1 and reversal of the rejections of Claims 2 and 3 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #3 To Be Reviewed: Whether each of Claims 4 and 14 is obvious under 35 USC 103(a) over Berry in view of Ross, and further in view of US Patent No. 5,845,263 to Camaisa ("Camaisa") and/or US Patent No. 6,026,375 to Hall ("Hall")

Claims 4 and 14 each stand rejected in the present Office Action on Page 5 as obvious over Berry in view of Ross, and further in view of Camaisa and/or Hall. The Examiner acknowledges that Berry "does not explicitly teach accepting service orders prior to boarding and associat[ing] each service order and mak[ing] the information obtainable be the onboard computer." Notwithstanding, the Examiner asserts that this is disclosed at Col. 4, lines 17-23 and Col. 17, lines 8-17 of Camaisa and in Hall at Col. 2, lines 32-35.

Camaisa is directed to "[a] portable interactive visual ordering system and method utilizing full-color images" (Abstract, first sentence). Fig. 10 from Camaisa is reproduced below, which shows a menu from such a system:

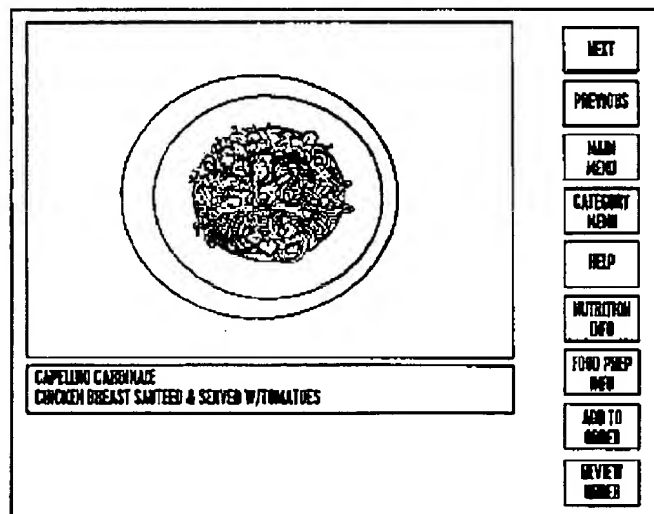


Fig. 10

Claim 4 recites that "the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for accepting service orders prior to boarding and associates each service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

computer.” According to the Examiner Camaisa teaches this at Col. 4, lines 17-23 and Col. 17, lines 8-17. These portions of Camaisa are reproduced below. Camaisa at Col. 4, lines 17-23:

In another embodiment of the invention, the system allows a customer to conveniently order food items from a hotel, place of business, or a home using visual methods. Remote computers, workstations, and terminals can connect over various forms of communication media to the central database structure, thus allowing the customer to see and receive information about the desired item.

And Camaisa at Col. 17, lines 8-17:

If the user selects Reserve Seating (state 1310) at state 1102 (FIG. 1), the system moves to state 1312, Enter Reservations in Database. At state 1312, the user can reserve a block of time, e.g. 2 hours, at a restaurant and secure his reservation by inputting a credit card number. If there is no input at this state, the system will automatically log the user off the system (state 1320) after a predetermined time period of inactivity, e.g. 45 seconds in order to ensure that the system is not logged on to inactive users.

As can be seen from the foregoing quoted passages there is no mention or suggestion in the cited portions of Camaisa of “accepting service orders prior to boarding” as recited in each of Claims 4 and 14. Nor is there any mention or suggestion of “external computer software” that “associates each service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer” as also recited in each of Claims 4 and 14. Therefore it is respectfully submitted that Camaisa does not teach what the Examiner alleges and does not meet the recitations of either of Claims 4 or 14.

As can be seen from the title, Hall is directed to processing orders from customers in a mobile environment. According to the abstract, the patent discloses a system that enables service providers to receive an order from a mobile customer. In addition, customer location information is received from a location determination system, which enables scheduling completion of the order to coincide with the customer’s arrival at a local facility (Abstract, first sentence).

The Examiner asserts that Hall teaches the recitations of Claims 4 and 14 at Col. 2, lines 32-35. The cited portion of Hall is a single sentence which simply states “Yet another

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

need exists for a method and system that allows service providers to schedule the completion of an order to coincide with the customer's arrival at the local facility." Accordingly there is no mention or suggestion in the cited portion of Hall of "accepting service orders prior to boarding" as recited in Claim 4. Nor is there any mention or suggestion of "external computer software" that "associates each service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer" as further recited in Claim 4.

Section 2142 of the MPEP provides that "[t]he examiner bears the initial burden of factually supporting any *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness" (emphasis in original; also see In re Oeticker, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). As further provided in MPEP 2142 "[i]f the examiner does not produce a *prima facie* case, the applicant is under no obligation to submit evidence of nonobviousness (emphasis in original).

As stated in Section 2142 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("*MPEP*") in the paragraph bridging Pages 2100-127 and 2100-128, "[t]he key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious", citing the US Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007).

The Examiner's articulation is far from clear as the cited portions of the prior art does not disclose what the Examiner alleges and the asserted combination therefore does not meet all of the recitations of either of Claims 4 or 14. Claim 4 depends from Claim 1 and therefore distinguishes over the cited prior art in addition to the reasons discussed for Claim 1. Claim 14 depends from Claim 13, which in turn depends from independent Claim 7. Claim 7 is discussed in detail below, and as Claim 14 depends indirectly from Claim 7, Claim 14 distinguishes over the cited prior art in addition to the reasons discussed for Claim 7

Accordingly, reversal of the rejection of each of Claims 4 and 14 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #4 To Be Reviewed: Whether Claim 5 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 6,249,774 to Roden et al. ("Roden") under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 5 stands rejected in the Final Office Action as obvious over Berry in view of Ross, and further in view of Roden (Final Office Action, Page 4; present Office Action, Page 5). According to the first line of the abstract, Roden discloses "[a] method by which a distributor owns, manages, and automatically replenishes the inventory of a business that is a customer of the distributor."

The rejection of Claim 5 based on the combination of Berry, Ross and Roden is improper and should be reversed because the Examiner has ignored claim recitations that the asserted combination does not meet. Specifically, the Examiner asserts at Page 5 of the Final Office Action that "Roden teaches the step wherein the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for analyzing at least one of historical information and currently entered service order information, and based on the analysis recommends vehicle inventory".

Nowhere, however, has the Examiner pointed out where the asserted combination meets the last phrase in the claim, namely wherein the external computer software "associates each current service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer". The Examiner did not address the foregoing recitation in Claim 5 and therefore has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness.

Claim 5 depends from Claim 1 and therefore distinguishes over the cited prior art in addition to the reasons discussed for Claim 1. Accordingly, reversal of the rejection of Claim 5 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #5 To Be Reviewed: Whether Claim 6 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 5,646,389 to Bravman et al. ("Roden") under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 6 stands rejected in the Final Office Action as obvious over Berry in view of Ross, and further in view of Bravman (Final Office Action, Page 5; present Office Action, Page 6). According to the Examiner "Berry does not explicitly teach managing flow of inventory from a terminal to a vehicle and from other sources to the terminal." The Examiner nevertheless concludes this would have been obvious from Col. 2, lines 49-62 and "figs" of Bravman. There is no mention of a terminal at Col. 2, lines 49-62 of Bravman. In addition, it would be helpful if the Examiner would cite a specific figure numbers as there are twenty-five sheets of drawings in Bravman. Notwithstanding, the only mention of a terminal in Bravman appears to be computer *terminals*, not terminals for a transport vehicle in a "system for fulfilling services orders" thereonboard as recited in Claim 1, from which Claim 6 depends.

In addition the Examiner has failed to provide "articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness." 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007), quoting In re Kahn, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329 (Fed. Cir. 2006). The reasoning presented by the Examiner is conclusory and not articulated. Namely, the Examiner's only reasoning is a statement made without support that one would have been motivated to combine Berry, Ross and Bravman "in order to ensure on-time delivery of products at their destination points". The only basis for the combination appears to be hindsight reasoning based upon the claim. As Claim 6 depends from Claim 1, it distinguishes over the cited art in addition to the reasons discussed for Claim 1. Hence, reversal of the rejection of Claim 6 is requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #6 To Be Reviewed: Whether Claim 25 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 5,979,757 to Tracy et al. ("Tracy") under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 25 stands rejected in the Final Office Action as obvious over Berry in view of Ross and further in view of Tracy. According to the present Office Action at Page 7 "Berry does not explicitly teach handheld computers used by vehicle personnel for creating and accessing services orders on the on board [sic] computer by communication between the handheld computer and the onboard computer." Notwithstanding, the Examiner asserts that "Tracey [sic] teaches this limitation" and that it would have been obvious to modify Berry to include this feature "in order to allow attendant access [to] orders using a portable terminal."

Once again, the Examiner's reasoning for the rejection is conclusory, not articulated, and therefore fails to comply with the standard set forth in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007). Attendants already have access to orders using a portable terminal, which is the "onboard computer transported with the vehicle", as recited in Claim 1 from which Claim 25 depends. The Examiner has failed to articulate why a further portable computer is necessary, other than the fact that it is recited in Claim 25, which is improper hind-sight reasoning.

Accordingly, Claim 25 is nonobvious for reasons in addition to those presented for Claim 1, from which Claim 25 depends. Hence, reversal of the rejection of Claim 25 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #6 To Be Reviewed: Whether Claim 25 is obvious over Berry and Ross in view of US Patent No. 5,979,757 to Tracy et al. ("Tracy") under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 25 stands rejected in the Final Office Action as obvious over Berry in view of Ross and further in view of Tracy. According to the present Office Action at Page 7 "Berry does not explicitly teach handheld computers used by vehicle personnel for creating and accessing services orders on the on board [sic] computer by communication between the handheld computer and the onboard computer." Notwithstanding, the Examiner asserts that "Tracey [sic] teaches this limitation" and that it would have been obvious to modify Berry to include this feature "in order to allow attendant access [to] orders using a portable terminal."

Once again, the Examiner's reasoning for the rejection is conclusory, not articulated, and therefore fails to comply with the standard set forth in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007). Attendants already have access to orders using a portable terminal, which is the "onboard computer transported with the vehicle", as recited in Claim 1 from which Claim 25 depends. The Examiner has failed to articulate why a further portable computer is necessary, other than the fact that it is recited in Claim 25, which is improper hind-sight reasoning.

Accordingly, Claim 25 is nonobvious for reasons in addition to those presented for Claim 1, from which Claim 25 depends. Hence, reversal of the rejection of Claim 25 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Grounds of Rejection #7 To Be Reviewed: Whether any of Claims 7 and 12 are obvious over Berry in view of US Patent No. 5,850,433 to Rondeau ("Rondeau") under 35 USC 103(a) and whether the Examiner may distill the claimed invention down to a "concept"

Claims 7 and 12 each stand rejected in the Final Office Action as obvious over Berry in view of Rondeau (Final Office Action, Page 6; Present Office Action, Page 7). According to the title and Col. 1, lines 5-7 and 54-55, Rondeau is directed to a system and method for providing an on-line, electronic directory service. The abstract states that the directory service maintains a database and "develops individual customer profiles for individual customers and stores these profiles in the database." The profiles include historical directory usage information and may be used to customize menu screens and search results provided to a customer.

Currently pending Claim 7 in pertinent part recites "providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on pre-selected products and services and historical preference". There is no teaching or suggestion in Rondeau that customers may pre-select products and services in which menu options are provided "that vary based on pre-selected products and services *and* historical preference" (emphasis added).

In response to the above-noted distinguishing recitation of Claim 7, the Examiner merely responded with an unsupported conclusory statement that "Rondeau explicitly teaches the *concept* of using customer historical usage or profile to customize [a] menu screen presented to the customer" (Final Office Action, Page 11, emphasis added).

The rejection of Claim 7 is in error because the Examiner has impermissibly distilled the invention down to a "concept" in violation of the requirement that the claimed invention as a whole must be considered. As stated in Section 2141.02 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("*MPEP*") on Page 2100-123, second column (emphasis in original):

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

In determining the differences between the prior art and the claims, the question under 35 U.S.C. 103 is not whether the differences themselves would have been obvious, but whether the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious.

As further stated on the following page of the MPEP “[d]istilling an invention down to the “gist” or “thrust” of an invention disregards the requirement of analyzing the subject matter as “as a whole” (MPEP, Section 2141.02(II), first column, citing W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock, Inc., 721 F.2d 1540, 220 USPQ 303 (Fed. Cir. 1983), *cert. denied*, 469 US 851 (1984). This includes distilling an invention down to a “concept” as the Examiner has done, see Bausch & Lomb v. Barnes-Hind/Hydrocurve, Inc., 796 F.2d 443, 447-49, 230 USPQ 416, 419-20 (Fed. Cir. 1986), *cert. denied*, 484 US 823 (1987). In Bausch & Lomb, the district court improperly focused on the “concept” of the invention and ignored express claim recitations.

There has been a failure to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. As stated in Section 2142 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (“MPEP”) in the paragraph bridging Pages 2100-127 and 2100-128, “[t]he key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious”, citing the US Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007).

The Examiner has not clearly articulated why Berry and Rondeau render obvious “providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on pre-selected products and services and historical preference”. In particular, there has been no citation to locations in either cited prior art reference pertaining to “pre-selected products and services” and providing menu options that vary based both on preselected products and services and historical preference. More particularly, the Examiner has ignored express recitations in Claim 7 of “providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on *pre-selected products and services and historical preference*” (emphasis added). Accordingly, reversal of the rejection of Claim 7 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Claim 12 depends from Claim 7 and further recites that “the handheld or onboard computers include hardware and software enabling reading of cards for facilitation of onboard cash-less transactions.” The Examiner completely ignores Claim 12 and fails to cite to any portions of Berry or Rondeau meeting the recitations of Claim 12. Therefore the rejection of Claim 12. As discussed previously, Section 2142 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (“MPEP”) in the paragraph bridging Pages 2100-127 and 2100-128, states that the “[t]he key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious”, citing the US Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007).

The Examiner’s articulation is not clear as there is no articulation of any reason for why Claim 12 is obvious. Accordingly, reversal of the rejection of Claim 12 is respectfully requested.

Grounds of Rejection #8 To Be Reviewed: Whether any of Claims 10 and 11 are obvious over Berry, Rondeau, and Tracy under 35 USC 103(a).

Claims 10 and 11 stand rejected as obvious over Berry, Rondeau and Tracy (present Office Action, Page 8). The Office Action acknowledges that Berry “does not explicitly teach handheld computers used by vehicle personnel for creating and accessing services on the on board [sic] computer” Notwithstanding, the Examiner asserts that “Tracey [sic] teaches this limitation” and that it would have been obvious to modify Berry to include this feature “in order to allow attendant access [to] orders using a portable terminal employing wireless communication.”

As discussed earlier, the Examiner’s reasoning for the rejection is conclusory, not articulated, and fails to comply with the standard set forth in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007). Attendants already have access to orders using

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

a portable terminal employing wireless communication, which is the “onboard computer transported with the vehicle”, as recited in Claim 8 from which Claims 10 and 11 each directly or indirectly depend. The Examiner has failed to articulate why a further portable computer is necessary, other than the fact that it is recited in Claim 8, which is improper hindsight reasoning.

Accordingly, Claims 10 and 11 are nonobvious for reasons in addition to those presented for Claim 8, from which Claims 10 and 11 directly or indirectly depend. Hence, reversal of the rejection of Claims 10 and 11 is respectfully requested.

Grounds of Rejection #9 To Be Reviewed: Whether any of Claims 10 and 11 are obvious over Berry, Rondeau, and Tracy under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 13 stands rejected as obvious over Berry, Rondeau and Ross (present Office Action, Page 8). The Examiner does not apply the cited art to Claim 13 and merely states “[s]ee claims 1, 2 and 7 analyses, supra.” There are a number of problems with the Examiner’s analysis as discussed above in connection with Claims 1, 2, and 7. For instance, concerning Claim 1 the Examiner ignores recitations in the claim and with respect to Claim 7 he improperly distills the claimed invention down to a concept. Accordingly, reversal of the rejection of Claim 13 is respectfully requested.

Grounds of Rejection #10 To Be Reviewed: Whether Claim 13 is obvious over Berry, Rondeau, and Ross under 35 USC 103(a)

The Examiner rejects Claim 14 as obvious over two different combinations of references. The first combination is applied against both Claims 4 and 14 on Page 5 of the present Office Action. The first combination was discussed previously herein and shown to be deficient.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

The second combination against Claim 14 is asserted on Page 8 of the present Office Action. According to the Examiner, Claim 14 is also obvious over “Berry in view of Rondeau in view of Ross, and further in view of Camaisa/Hall.” For the reasoning behind the rejection, the Examiner simply states “[s]ee claims 4 and 13 analysis, supra.” The Examiner’s reasoning does not make any sense. Rondeau was not cited in the rejection of Claim 4 and “Camaisa/Hall” was not cited in the rejection of Claim 13. Accordingly, the Applicant is left to guess at why Claim 14 has been rejected over this second combination of prior art.

As discussed earlier, Section 2142 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (“MPEP”) states that “[t]he key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious”, citing the US Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007). The Examiner’s conclusory reference to prior analysis of two other claims in which the analysis of neither claim applies all of the references cited against Claim 14 is NOT a “clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious”.

Finally, the Examiner’s analysis of both Claims 4 and 13 is insufficient as discussed previously. Accordingly, reversal is respectfully requested of the additional rejection of Claim 14 stated on Page 8 of the present Office Action.

Grounds of Rejection #11 To Be Reviewed: Whether Claim 15 is obvious over Berry, Rondeau, Ross and US Patent No. 6,201,797 to Leuca et al. (“Leuca”) under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 15 stands rejected as obvious over Berry, Rondeau, Ross and Leuca (present Office Action, Page 9). The Office Action acknowledges that Berry “does not explicitly teach” the additional recitations of Claim 15. Namely, Berry does not teach that “if a service order includes a request for Internet access, the onboard computer provides Internet access to a connection at a passenger seat location corresponding to the service order, by making use of

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

said communication route.” Notwithstanding the Examiner asserts that these recitations are taught at Col. 2, lines 7-12 of Leuca and that it would have been obvious to modify Berry to include these teachings “in order to provide internet access to passengers while onboard” (present Office Action, Page 9). Col. 2, lines 7-12 of Leuca are reproduced below:

The present invention provides a method and a communications system that provides an integrated voice/data service to airborne passengers that can mix various data services, such as accessing the Internet or placing a voice call, and thereby efficiently utilizing the air channels available to airborne passengers.

As can be seen there is no mention in the cited portion of Leuca of providing “Internet access to a connection *at a passenger seat location* corresponding to the service order” as recited in Claim 15 (emphasis added). Accordingly, a prima facie case has not been established for the rejection of Claim 15. Moreover, Claim 15 depends from Claim 13, which in turn depends from Claim 7. Accordingly, Claim 15 is nonobvious over the cited art in addition to the reasons previously discussed for each of Claims 7 and 13. Thus, reversal of the rejection of Claim 15 is respectfully requested.

Grounds of Rejection #12 To Be Reviewed: Whether any of Claims 8 and 9 are obvious over Berry in view of US Patent No. 5,727,163 to Bezos (“Bezos”) under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 8 and 9 each stand rejected as obvious over Berry in view of Bezos. As can be seen from the abstract, Bezos teaches a system for using a credit card over an unsecured network to submit an order to “a remote merchant location (32) from a customer’s location (10).” In particular, the order is transmitted over the Internet to the remote merchant location (32), but includes only a subset of the credit card number to which the order is to be charged (Bezos, Abstract). The customer thereafter telephones the remote merchant location and provides the complete credit card number (Bezos, Abstract). Figure 1 from Bezos

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

illustrates the principal components used to implement the system (Bezos, Col. 4, lines 41-

43). Figure 1 from Bezos is reproduced below:

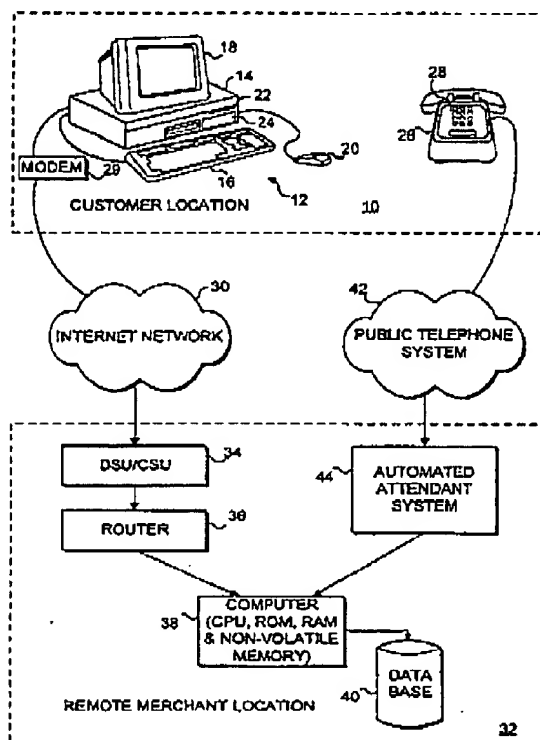


FIG. 1

The present Office Action asserts that Bezos teaches using a laptop or PDA to place an order and that it would have been obvious to modify Berry to "include this feature...in order to incorporate [a] portable device as an alternative to [a] fixed device" (present Office Action Page 10; Final Office Action, Page 9).

Modifying Berry to include the teachings of Bezos would be redundant and defeat the intended purpose of the disclosed arrangement in Berry. Figure 2 from Berry is reproduced as follows:

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

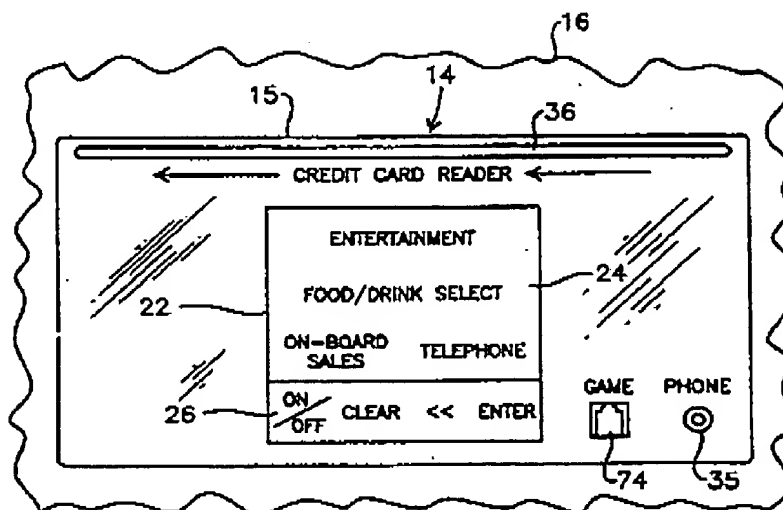


Fig.2

As can be seen from Figure 2, Berry already includes a credit card reader (36) for each passenger seat in the aircraft. There is therefore no need or motivation to implement a system for using a credit card over an unsecured network as taught in Bezos.

In addition, the system in Berry is secure. Allowing passengers to connect their own personal computers to the system as taught by Bezos would introduce vulnerabilities creating an unsecure network and defeat the intended purpose of the invention in Berry. The purpose of the invention in Berry is to increase cabin management efficiency by providing for ordering of catalog items, credit card payments, and placement of telephone calls "that are entirely free of flight attendant participation" (Berry, Col. 2, lines 38-44).

Bezos teaches a system for secure credit card payments over an unsecure network by submitting only a portion of the credit card number and thereafter telephoning the merchant to provide the complete credit card number. This would defeat the goal of increased cabin management efficiency in Berry by requiring flight attendants to receive the complete credit card number for secure credit card transactions as taught by Bezos. Accordingly, reversal of

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

The Examiner groups Claim 9 with Claim 8 and rejects Claim 9 in the present Office Action for the exact same reasons as Claim 8 (present Office Action, Pages 9 and 10). However, this is improper because Claim 9 depends from Claim 8, and further recites “wireless communication between the passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers and the onboard computer.” The Examiner *completely ignores* this recitation in Claim 9 of the present Office Action and has not cited prior art that meets all the recitations of the claim.

As discussed previously, the present Office Action is a duplicate of the previous Final Office Action, except for the section entitled “Response to Arguments” beginning on Pages 11 and 12 of the previous Final Office Action. The previous Final Office Action made more sense because it asserted in this section with respect to the recitation of wireless communication in Claim 9 that “it is well known that [a] PDA uses wireless connectivity in communication with other devices” (Final Office Action, Page 12).

Notwithstanding, the Examiner cannot reject Claim 9 on the unsupported conclusory statement that “it is well known that [a] PDA uses wireless connectivity in communication with other devices”. Applicant timely traversed this assertion pursuant to MPEP 2144.03 in an Amendment dated June 20, 2007 (6/20/2007 Amendment, Page 14, line 22 to Page 17, line 2). In the 6/20/2007 Amendment, Applicant specifically pointed out the errors in the Examiner’s previous action, including a statement as to why the assertion that wireless connectivity was not considered to be common knowledge or well-known in the art.

Namely, the present application has an effective US filing date of April 19, 1999 based upon a provisional application. The proper standard in concluding whether something “is well known” is whether it was well known prior to April 19, 1999. As stated in MPEP 2144.03(A) “the notice of facts beyond the record which may be taken by the examiner must be ‘capable of such instant and unquestionable demonstration as to defy dispute’” (quoting In

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

re Ahlert, 424 F.2d 1088, 1091, 165 USPQ 418, 420 (CCPA 1970), (citing In re Knapp Monarch Co., 296 F.2d 230, 132 USPQ 6 (CCPA 1961)).

As of the effective filing date of the present application, wireless communication between “passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers and [an] onboard computer” as recited in Claim 9 is not “capable of such instant and unquestionable demonstration as to defy dispute”. If it were, Berry, which has a filing date of July 2, 1992, should have disclosed the subject matter. Alternatively, Bezos, which was has filing date of March 30, 1995 and mentions a PDA, should have disclosed it.

If such subject matter is indeed “capable of such instant and unquestionable demonstration as to defy dispute” prior to the US effective filing date of the present application, it should not be difficult to locate and cite prior art documents supporting the rejections that were made by the Examiner based on the assertion of this subject matter being well known.

As stated in MPEP 2144.03(C) “[i]f applicant adequately traverses the examiner’s assertion of official notice, the examiner must provide documentary evidence in the next Office action if the rejection is to be maintained (sentence bridging Pages 2100-146 and 2100-147, citing 37 CFR 1.104(c)(2)). The Examiner originally made the assertion based on official notice in the Office Action of March 20, 2007 on Page 3. Applicant adequately traversed the rejection of Claim 9 and the Examiner did not cite documentary evidence to support the rejection in the next Office action or even state the reasons for the rejection of Claim 9.

Finally, even if it is well known “that [a] PDA uses wireless connectivity in communication with other devices”, the asserted prior art combination still does not meet all of the recitations of Claim 9. Namely, Claim 9 recites “wireless communication between the passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers and

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

the *onboard* computer” (emphasis added). While it may be well known for a PDA to use wireless connectivity with ground-based devices, it is not well known for such communication between “an onboard computer transported with the vehicle” as recited in Claim 1 from which Claim 9 depends, and “passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers” as also recited in the claim.

Moreover, Claim 9 depends from Claim 8 and is therefore nonobvious over the cited prior art in addition to the reasons discussed for Claim 8. Accordingly, reversal of the rejections of Claims 8 and 9 is respectively requested.

Grounds of Rejection #13 To Be Reviewed: Whether any of Claims 16 through 24 are obvious over (1) Berry, (2) Ross, (3) Camaisa, (4) Rondeau, (5) Roden and (6) US Patent No. 6,122,620 to Weber (“Weber”) under 35 USC 103(a) and whether the Examiner may distill the claimed invention down to a “concept”

(a) Claims 16 and 17

Claim 16 and 17 each stand rejected in the present Office Action as obvious over the combination of (1) Berry, (2) Ross, (3) Camaisa, (4) Rondeau, (5) Roden and (6) Weber. In the first paragraph on Page 11, the Examiner states that “Rondeau is cited for teaching customizing [a] customer menu based on historical usage” and ends with the parenthetical comment “see claim 7 analysis”.

As discussed previously, the Examiner’s analysis of Claim 7 is in error because he impermissibly distills the invention down to a “concept” in violation of the requirement that the claimed invention as a whole must be considered (MPEP 2141.02 and Bausch & Lomb v. Barnes-Hind/Hydrocurve, Inc., 796 F.2d 443, 447-49, 230 USPQ 416, 419-20 (Fed. Cir. 1986), *cert. denied*, 484 US 823 (1987)).

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

The Examiner concedes that Berry, Ross, Camaisa, Rondeau, and Roden do not teach “accessing database information pertaining to vehicle departure and destination” (present Office Action, Pages 10, 11 and 13; Final Office Action, Pages 9, 10 and 12). Due to this shortcoming, the Examiner cites Weber, which is directed to a system for radio transmission of real-time airline flight information (Weber, Title). In particular, the system gathers flight information, converts it to an audio signal and transmits it for reception by an airport visitor’s automobile via radio frequencies (Weber, Col. 2, lines 19-23). With respect to Weber, the patent is directed to a system for radio transmission of real-time airline flight information (Weber, Title). In particular, the system gathers flight information, converts it to an audio signal and transmits it for reception by an airport visitor’s automobile via radio frequencies (Weber, Col. 2, lines 19-23). Accordingly, “the airport visitor has the information needed to determine whether they need to go to either take or meet a flight” (Weber, Col. 2, lines 27-29).

The Examiner asserts that Weber teaches “accessing database information pertaining to vehicle departure and destination” (Final Office Action, Page 10) and that “Roden[t] is cited for teaching past service[s] information and inventory information” (Final Office Action, Page 12). Based upon the foregoing, the Examiner concludes that Weber and Roden render obvious the recitation in Claim 16 of “accessing database information pertaining to vehicle departure, destination, past service[s] orders, and inventory information”.

According to the US Supreme Court, it is legally insufficient to conclude that a claim is obvious just because each feature of a claim can be independently shown in the cited art. KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007). In particular, “it can be important to identify a reason that would have prompted a person of ordinary skill in the relevant field to combine the elements in the way that the new claimed invention does.” Id.

No such reason has been identified. As noted above, Weber is directed to providing real-time airline flight information, which is not useful in the claimed invention. The claimed

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

invention is directed to a system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle, which requires positioning inventory in advance, i.e., not based upon information in real-time. More particularly, the Examiner has not provided a reason why a person of ordinary skill in the art would have been prompted to combine a portion of a reference directed to providing real-time information with another reference directed to past service information and inventory information upon other than the present application.

While the foregoing recitation of Claim 16 may possibly appear to be obvious based upon Weber and Roden in hindsight, this recitation was not obvious at the time of the US effective filing date of the present application in 1999. As noted by the US Supreme Court, “[a] factfinder should be aware, of course, of the distortion caused by hindsight bias and must be cautious of arguments reliant upon *ex post* reasoning” *Id.* at 1397 (emphasis in original). It is respectfully submitted that due to the lengthy pendency of the application in the US Patent and Trademark Office, hindsight has colored the conclusions reached by the Examiner.

Finally, as discussed above in connection with Claim 7, the Examiner has ignored recitations in Claim 7 and these recitations also appear in Claim 16. Namely, there has been no citation to locations in the cited prior art pertaining to “pre-selected products and services” and providing menu options that vary based both on preselected products and services and historical preference. More particularly, the Examiner has ignored the recitations in Claim 16 of “providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on *pre-selected products and services and historical preference*” (emphasis added).

Finally, the Examiner has neglected to provide any explanation as to why Camaisa is cited in the rejection of Claim 16. Specifically, the present Office action has not identified where in Camaisa teachings are located disclosing recitations of Claim 16. As noted earlier, Section 2142 of the MPEP provides that “[t]he examiner bears the initial burden of factually supporting any *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness” (emphasis in original). For the foregoing reasons, reversal of the rejection of Claim 16 is respectfully requested.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

Claim 17 depends from Claim 16 and further recites that “the external computer accepts service orders via communication with other computers through which service orders are entered.” The Examiner does not identify any portions of the cited art teaching these further recitations. Accordingly, Claim 17 is nonobvious over the cited art in addition to the reasons discussed for Claim 16, and reversal of the rejection of Claim 17 is likewise requested.

(b) Claims 18 and 19

Concerning the rejection of Claims 18 and 19, the Office Action merely states that “Camaisa teaches the step wherein the other computers include kiosks at terminal areas” (Present Office Action, Page 11). As discussed earlier, Section 2142 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (“MPEP”) states that “[t]he key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious”, citing the US Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007).

The Examiner’s rejection of Claims 18 and 19 is based on a conclusory statement with no “clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious”. Furthermore, Claims 18 and 19 each depend from Claim 17, which in turn depends from Claim 16. Thus, Claims 18 and 19 are further nonobvious over the cited art for reasons in addition to those presented for Claims 16 and 17.

(c) Claims 20-22 and 24

Concerning the rejection of Claim 20, the Office Action merely states “[s]ee claims 4 and 5 analyses, supra (present Office Action, Page 11). Regarding the rejection of Claim 21, the Office states “[s]ee claim 4 analyses, supra.” Finally with respect to Claims 22 and 24, the Office only states “[s]ee claim 1 analysis, supra” (Present Office Action, Page 12).

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

As discussed earlier, there are many problems with the Examiner's analysis as discussed above in connection with Claims 1 and 4. For instance, recitations that have been ignored in the claims, claim construction inconsistent with the specification, impermissibly distilling the invention down to a "concept," and lack of articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness. Moreover, each of Claims 20-22 and 24 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 16, and are thus nonobvious over the cited art for reasons in addition to those previously discussed for Claim 16.

(d) Claim 23

The Examiner neglects to provide any explanation as to why Claim 23 is obvious over Berry, Ross, Camaisa, Roden, Rondeau and Weber as asserted on Page 10 of the Office Action. This is a clear failure to provide "some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness" as required by KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007), quoting In re Kahn, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329 (Fed. Cir. 2006).

Hence, the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness for the rejection of Claim 23, and reversal of the rejection of Claim 23 is therefore respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

The treatment accorded this application by the US Patent and Trademark Office has been appalling. It took the US Patent Office more than five years from the filing date of this application to issue a first office action (Office Action dated November 3, 2006). The prosecution before the present Examiner of record has continued for more than two additional years, with repeated assertions of new grounds of rejections, multiple Office Actions, and improper reopening of prosecution after the filing of an appeal brief on the pretext of a new

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

ground of rejection. As of this filing, the application has now been pending for more than seven years through no fault of the applicant.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the prosecution of this application has been improperly delayed and that there has been a lack of compliance with the principles of compact prosecution. The Board is accordingly requested to expeditiously reverse the Examiner's rejection of Claims 1-25. As has been shown, the record is replete with examination errors, such as impermissibly distilling the invention down to a "concept," lack of articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness, citation to portions of prior art that do not disclose what the Examiner alleges, citation of prior art with no explanation as to how that art meets the recitations of the claim against which the art has been cited, hindsight bias, claim construction that is not consistent with the specification, and recitations that have been ignored in the claims.

For these reasons, it is submitted that the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness for the rejection of any of the claims and that all of the rejections should be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian P. Furrer, USPTO Reg. No. 37,627
ONDA TECHNO Intl. Patent Attys.
12-1, Omiya-cho 2-chome
Gifu-city 500-8731 JAPAN
Tel. 81-58-265-9124

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. (rejected) A system for fulfilling services orders onboard a transport vehicle, the system comprising:

(a) a plurality of computers that include an onboard computer transported with the vehicle, and an external computer not transported with the vehicle;

(b) software installed on the onboard computer, the onboard computer software being operable on the onboard computer for causing the onboard computer to perform tasks including:

i) obtaining service information from the external computer via communication with the external computer if a communication pathway to the external computer is open; and

ii) providing access to service information by vehicle personnel for fulfillment of the service orders; and

(c) software installed on the external computer, the external computer software being operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks including:

i) acquiring information to determine the available services provided on the transport vehicle; and

ii) managing the delivery of services to the transport vehicle; and

iii) making service information obtainable by the onboard computer.

2. (rejected) The system of claim 1, wherein at least some service orders include requests for delivery of products to passengers, and the onboard computer software includes logic routines adapted for managing delivery of products in accordance with service orders, and billing of passengers for fulfillment of service orders.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

3. (rejected) The system of claim 2, wherein the logic routines associate a seat location with each service order.

4. (rejected) The system of claim 1, wherein the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for accepting service orders prior to boarding and associates each service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer.

5. (rejected) The system of claim 1, wherein the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for analyzing at least one of historical service order information and currently entered service order information, and based on the analysis recommends vehicle inventory, and associates each current service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer.

6. (rejected) The system of claim 1, wherein at least some of the service orders include requests for delivery of products and the external computer software further comprises software logic operable for managing flow of inventory from a terminal to the vehicle and from other sources to the terminal.

7. (rejected) A system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle, the system comprising an onboard computer transported with the vehicle and connections with electronic devices operated by vehicle personnel or passengers, the onboard computer including software, which when operated on the onboard computer and electronic devices causes the onboard computer to perform tasks comprising providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on pre-selected products and services and historical preference and accepting service orders entered via the electronic devices by vehicle

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

personnel or passengers and making the service orders accessible to vehicle personnel.

8. (rejected) A system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle, the system comprising an onboard computer transported with the vehicle and connections with electronic devices operated by vehicle personnel or passengers, the onboard computer including software, which when operated on the onboard computer and electronic devices causes the onboard computer to perform tasks comprising accepting service orders entered via the electronic devices by vehicle personnel or passengers and making the service orders accessible to vehicle personnel, wherein the electronic devices include passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers.

9. (rejected) The system of claim 8, wherein the connections comprise wireless communication between the passenger supplied personal information processing apparatus carried on by passengers and the onboard computer.

10. (rejected) The system of claim 7, wherein the electronic devices include handheld computers used by vehicle personnel for creating and accessing service orders on the onboard computer by communication between the handheld computers and the onboard computer.

11. (rejected) The system of claim 10, wherein the communication between the handheld computers and the onboard computer comprises wireless communication.

12. (rejected) The system of claim 7, wherein the handheld or onboard computers include hardware and software enabling reading of cards for facilitation of onboard cash-less transactions.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

13. (rejected) The system of claim 7, further comprising an external computer not transported with the vehicle, the external computer including software being operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks comprising: a) accepting service orders for passengers via communication with other computers through which service orders are entered; b) making accepted service orders obtainable by the onboard computer, wherein the onboard computer software is operable for obtaining passenger service orders from the external computer if a communication route to the external computer is open; and c) validating credit transactions communicated by the onboard computer if a communication route to the onboard computer is open.

14. (rejected) The system of claim 13, wherein the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for accepting service orders prior to passenger boarding, and associates each service order with a flight and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer.

15. (rejected) The system of claim 13, wherein if a service order includes a request for Internet access, the onboard computer provides Internet access to a connection at a passenger seat location corresponding to the service order, by making use of said communication route.

16. (rejected) A system for fulfilling service orders on a transport vehicle, the system comprising an external computer not transported with the vehicle, the external computer including software being operable on the external computer for causing the external computer to perform tasks comprising: a) accessing database information pertaining to vehicle departure, destination, past services orders, and inventory information; b) based on the database information, estimating service orders expected to be received and recommending inventory for transport with the vehicle for onboard fulfillment of service orders; and

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

providing menu options adapted for specific customer preferences that vary based on pre-selected products and services and historical preference.

17. (rejected) The system of claim 16, wherein the external computer accepts service orders via communication with other computers through which service orders are entered.

18. (rejected) The system of claim 17, wherein the other computers include kiosks at terminal areas.

19. (rejected) The system of claim 17, wherein the other computers include computers connected to the Internet.

20. (rejected) The system of claim 17, wherein the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for analyzing currently accepted service orders prior to boarding to determine needed inventory for onboard service order fulfillment and associates each service order with a vehicle departure and makes the information obtainable by the onboard computer.

21. (rejected) The system of claim 16, wherein the external computer software is further operable on the external computer for recommending based on the database information, inventory for terminal storage for replenishing onboard inventory.

22. (rejected) The system of claim 16, further comprising an onboard computer, including software installed on the onboard computer, the onboard computer software being operable on the onboard computer for causing the onboard computer to perform tasks including: a) obtaining service information from the external computer via communication

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

with the external computer if a communication pathway to the external computer is open; and
b) providing access to service information by vehicle personnel for fulfillment thereof.

23. (rejected) The system of claim 16, wherein at least some of the service orders include requests for delivery of products and the external computer software further comprising software logic operable for managing flow of inventory from the terminal to the vehicle and from other sources to the terminal.

24. (rejected) The system of claim 22 wherein the onboard computer software further comprises routines used to manage product flow on the vehicle and residual product flow off the vehicle.

25. (rejected) The system of claim 1, further comprising handheld computers used by vehicle personnel for creating and accessing service orders on the onboard computer by communication between the handheld computers and the onboard computer.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None.

Application Serial No. 09/682,583
Appeal Brief

X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None.